

**Town of Lincoln**

**Budget Board Meeting**

**March 22, 2006**

**Members Present:**

**Ken Booth Greg Leonard Cheryl Ethier Bob Ericson Carl Brunetti  
Claudette Lussier Jack Newman Joe Dziobek Linda Noble**

**Members Absent:**

**Roberta Gosselin Mary Varr**

**The meeting began at 7:35 with the Pledge of Allegiance.**

**The Parks and Recreation Commission was present to discuss the Administrator's proposed Parks and Recreation budget.**

**Kevin Bryson, Parks and Recreation Commission Chairman, stated that the Commission had received a list from Paul Prachniak, Parks and Recreation Director, of what capital items need to be completed. It was noted that one item, a \$6,000 sprinkler system for the Lonsdale outfield, has been requested for 4 or 5 years.**

**Ken Booth noted that the Administrator had recommended a budget of only \$50,000 for capital items related to parks and recreation.**

**Kevin Bryson noted that the long-term capital plan created for all of the parks has not been forgotten, and that the Commission intends to go back to using the plans next year.**

**Ken Booth agreed that the parks and fields get a lot of use and**

**should be kept in as good of position as possible.**

**The Budget Board welcomed public comment and questions. There were none at the time.**

**The Town Council was present to discuss their budget with the Budget Board.**

**Ken Booth welcomed the Council and thanked them for coming.**

**Ken noted that the Budget Board sees some of the same issues occur historically, and that the Budget Board does not have the power to change some of the issues, they would like to alert the Town Council to them, who do have the power to make the corrections.**

**The Town Council budget is \$38,000.**

**Ken noted that the new council will be due for a raise in salary which will amount to about \$500 extra per member, which is not reflected in the recommended budget.**

**The Council has a \$5,000 expense budget and also \$5,000 for claims settlement.**

**\$10,500 is budgeted for a salary study and \$15,000 for the annual audit.**

**Cheryl Ethier asked if the fixed assets of the town are on a set schedule yet.**

**Liz Robinson, Council President stated that she did not know if they**

**were on a schedule yet.**

**Ken noted that there was a negative amount in the expended column for claims settlements.**

**He also noted that the Budget Board would like to see more consistent recording of expenditures.**

**Ken noted that the town does not budget for lawsuit payouts, and that there have been large amounts paid out in recent years.**

**Cumberland was forced to have a supplemental appropriation to cover their lawsuit payouts.**

**Ken thought that Lincoln should have a plan of maybe accruing amounts for the lawsuit payouts anticipated.**

**Councilman Ronald Loparto made a note that since claims settlements are in the Council's budget, they should know exactly what is paid for through claims settlements and how much cases are settled for.**

**Ken thought that having a historical perspective may give the Budget Board a better handle on lawsuit payouts and perhaps an average could be established, as with the snow plowing budget.**

**Councilman Ron McKenna noted that claims settlements are an educated guess until they actually go through.**

**Jay O'Grady noted that he asked the Administrator what was included in claims settlements because the claims that the Council have approved did not add up to the total expended amount.**

**Ken noted that settlements like General Cable should be shown as**

accrued because the auditors set up an accrual to pay out large settlements such as it.

Cheryl Ethier noted that many things in the Management Letter are repeats of past conditions even though the problems should have been corrected.

Liz Robinson noted that the number of reportable conditions is lower, and that some of them do take more time to correct.

The upgrade in software is helping with purchase orders.

Also, the Council has just approved a bid for outsourcing payroll which will cost \$98,000 for 3 years for municipal and schools combined.

Carl Brunetti asked if the outsourcing of payroll will actually save money and on personnel.

There will be a savings, particularly because the payroll will be biweekly as a result of the new system.

Councilman Keith Macksoud noted that it was the recommendation of the performance audit to have payroll outsourced.

Jack Newman noted that there should be monetary justifications as well, not just a recommendation.

Joe Dziobek noted that the Budget Board would like to see better accountability from all departments.

The Budget Board agrees that some positions are underpaid, but feels that a true study of salaries should be done before they are

**corrected.**

**Many job descriptions have been brought up to date by the previous Personnel Director.**

**Liz Robinson noted that the Council has approved an RFQ for the salary study.**

**Councilman Jay O'Grady noted that a listing provided of town, position title and salary associated was not enough information, which is why the town originally went out to bid. No bids were received, but the Finance Director did contact a few specific companies regarding the study. The feeling at that point was that the RFP submitted was too specific.**

**A member of the public noted that perhaps the town should have a bidders' conference where any companies interested in bidding could attend an informational session.**

**Claudette Lussier also noted that some of the salaries requested fall outside of the provided warrant ranges, and that the Town Council should approve a new salary warrant prior to the Financial Town Meeting to correct the ranges.**

**The fixing of the Manton Dam and Barney Pond Dam both are going out to bid, which was approved by the Town Council at their last meeting.**

**Ken noted that there is no real long-term capital plan for the town, and one is needed.**

**The dams are going to be funded over 4 years, but the fixing will happen at one time, and not over 4 years.**

**Ken noted that the town has known that the dams are high-hazard for about 7 years, when it first received a letter of violation, and he thought that it should be paid for through the bond.**

**The Facilities Study showed that there is a lot of money that needs to be spent, and the Budget Board felt that high-priority items should be done first or it could affect taxpayers' willingness to vote for other bonds in the future.**

**Mark Krieger noted that the auditors may be interested in accruing funding for legal settlements.**

**Mark thought that the amounts funded for legal settlements should be increased because small claims, such as mailboxes damaged by town employees, do add up quickly and there have been a lot in recent times.**

**Greg Leonard noted that audited expenses would give a better idea of how much funding is needed for the settlements.**

**Claudette Lussier noted that the negative amount shown was a reversal of an adjustment.**

**Claudette wanted to know what the difference between Town Solicitor's Settlements and Town Council Settlement's.**

**Mark Krieger noted that the settlements in his budget are never funded.**

**Liz Robinson noted that the town appointed the attorney that works**

**for the schools as an assistant solicitor.**

**Mark Krieger noted that the Supreme Court ruled on a Johnston case that said that the schools couldn't hire their own attorney, that it would have to be through the town's solicitor.**

**Therefore, the schools attorney will be funded through the solicitor until legislation is passed to allow schools to hire their own attorney, which is in the works.**

**Jay O'Grady asked if the moving of the practice football field location could be done at the regular financial town meeting.**

**Ken felt that if it is just the moving of the location, and not anything to do with monetary matters, that it could be done.**

**Keith Macksoud thought that the regular financial town meeting should be solely for the 2006-2007 budget.**

**Mark Krieger agreed and thought that it should be a separate special financial town meeting, and that the original resolution was too specific and should not have had to specify exact location.**

**Ken thought that it was a disservice to the system to have a special financial town meeting on the same night as the regular financial town meeting.**

**Carl Brunetti noted that past years are addressed at a financial town meeting when supplemental appropriations are provided for.**

**Also, no monetary issues would be addressed, just the moving of the location of a field.**

**The Budget Board School Subcommittee split from the Municipal**

**Subcommittee.**

**Keith Macksoud stated that the Town Council has already agreed upon a special financial town meeting, and the process of getting the special meeting took a lot of time, which is the only reason that it became so close to the regular financial town meeting.**

**Greg Leonard noted that if it is publicized correctly, then both meetings should be able to be on the same night.**

**Mark Krieger noted that voters would have to register for the special financial town meeting and then leave the venue to come back in and reregister for the regular financial town meeting.**

**Ron McKenna noted that people could simply register for both before entering, alleviating that issue.**

**Ken noted that having a special financial town meeting under such circumstances will set the precedence for future meetings.**

**Ken noted that in the 4th quarter, the Administrator is required to go to the Town Council to reallocate funds to ensure that there are no lines overexpended, and that a total amount over the amount voted on by the taxpayers cannot be spent.**

**Ken noted that in the past, there were times when the town was taxed for a certain amount and there ended up being a large surplus.**

**He also noted that excess revenues do not mean more expenditures, because the town still cannot exceed the amount approved by the taxpayers at the financial town meeting.**

**Liz Robinson wanted to locate where the issue of expenditures and**

revenues was in the town charter.

Ken wanted to know if a waiver would be needed and if one was being pursued if the GIS mapping was not going to be finished on schedule. Liz Robinson said that she would find out.

Ken noted that resolutions can either go through the Council or the Budget Board, and also noted that a resolution was passed for \$988,000, but the audited numbers did not match the amounts specified for specific things in the resolution.

Ron McKenna noted that the Budget Board is a thankless job, and he thinks its integral and should remain intact.

Jay O'Grady wanted to know whether there would be greater pension funding this year.

Ken noted that there is no pension board or ordinance, and that no audit has been done on the pension fund.

Ken noted that Roberta Gosselin has issues with the 8% rate used, because it seems high.

Also, the Police COLA will have a large affect in the future.

Ken thanked the Town Council for attending the meeting, and the Town Council adjourned from the meeting.

The Municipal Subcommittee took a short recess.

**Ken said that he and Roberta went through revenues and got the state projected revenue figures.**

**There is a new revenue for a historical tax credit, to offset revenue lost on historical buildings that are not taxable.**

**Ken will ask the Administrator about the new revenue.**

**Reimbursements for the revaluation should be \$94,720.**

**There appeared to be some issues with the budget formulas that could have been caused by yearly updates.**

**The Budget Board will ask for the amounts voted upon at last years FTM and the amounts requested this year as a start and will then make any changes necessary.**

**The Budget Board rejoined as a whole.**

**It was noted that the salaries are skewed as well because they are shown expended including raises, which have not been given yet because the contracts have not been settled.**

**Bob Ericson made a motion to have the salaries fixed to have the raises taken out until they are given to make the numbers true so that it will also give a better historical perspective in the future. Carl Brunetti seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.**

**Jack Newman made a motion to defer the approval of the minutes of March 16th.**

**Greg Leonard seconded the motion. The minutes were deferred by unanimous vote.**

**Carl Brunetti made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jack Newman. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05.**